

NOTICE OF DECISION
USDA Forest Service
Ouachita National Forest
Poteau-Cold Springs Ranger District
Scott County, Arkansas
West Haw Mountain Project

Opportunity to Comment on West Haw Ecological Management Unit

The Ouachita National Forest, Poteau-Cold Springs Ranger District, has prepared an environmental assessment for the West Haw Ecological Management Unit. Management actions are needed to move the project area towards the design criteria for Management Area 21 (Old Growth Restoration) and Management Areas 22 (Renewal of the Shortleaf Pine-Bluestem Grass Ecosystem and Red-cockaded Woodpecker Habitat) in the Revised Forest Plan (USDA Forest Service. 2005a.).

West Haw Creek project area is located in Township 2 North, Range 32 West, Sections 19-22, 27-30, 31-32; T1N, R32W, S5-6; T2N, R33W, S24-25, 36; and T1N R33W S1. This project area is in Scott County, Arkansas on the Oklahoma-Arkansas border and is also approximately 4 miles north of the Scott-Polk County lines. Black Fork Wilderness is about 5 miles south of this project area. Walker Mountain lies to the northeast.

The proposed project is an activity implementing a land management plan and is subject to pre-decisional objection process at 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and B.

The proposed project or activity is available on-line at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=47489>. The EA and supporting documentation is also available for review at the Cold Springs Ranger District office in Booneville, Arkansas. Additional information regarding this project or activity can be obtained from: Donna Reagan, PO Box 417, Booneville, AR, 479-675-4743 ext. 107, dreagan@fs.fed.us.

How to Comment and Timeframe

The opportunity to comment ends 30 days following the date of publication of the legal notice in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. Only those who submit timely and specific written comments §218.2 regarding the proposed project or activity during a public comment period established by the responsible official are eligible to file an objection §218.24(b)(6). For issues to be raised in objections, they must be based on previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity and attributed to the objector. The publication date of the legal notice in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to submit written comments on a proposed project or activity. The time period for the opportunity to comment on a proposed project or activity to be documented with an environmental assessment shall not be extended. It is the responsibility of all individuals and organizations to ensure that their comments are received in a timely manner.

Written comments must be submitted to: AJ Brigance, District Ranger, PO Box 417, Booneville, AR 72927 or fax (479-675-3232). The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are: 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc, .docx) to comments-southern-ouachita-coldsprings@fs.fed.us. For objection eligibility, each individual or representative from each entity submitting timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request §218.24(b)(8).

Please state "West Haw Project" in the subject line when providing electronic comments, or on the envelope when replying by mail.